

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 /082 W

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R 200243Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4602

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 5370

NOFORN

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MY, UR

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIAL ON SOVIET DAM PROJECT

KUALA LUMPUR 4608

1. A SENIOR MFA OFFICIAL INFORMED EMBASSY SEPT 6 THAT THE
MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT RPT NOT TOLD THE SOVIET EMBASSY
HERE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S DECISION TO DENY FURTHER PARTICIPATION
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IN THE TEMBELING HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT TO THE USSR. INSTEAD,

THE MFA HAS TOLD THEM THAT THE PROJECT HAS BEEN DEFERRED SINE DIE TO COMPLETE PLANS FOR THE MOVEMENT OF 5,000 VILLAGERS FROM THE PROPOSED CATCHMENT AREA AND TO CARRY OUT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY. (ENVIRONMENTALISTS HAVE, INDEED, PROTESTED THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE PROJECT IN THE 1,677 SQUARE MILE TAMAN NEGARA OR NATIONAL PARK, LAST REFUGE OF MANY SPECIES OF WILDLIFE ONCE COMMON THROUGHOUT MALAYSIA.) IN FACT, OUR SOURCE SAID, THE PROJECT HAS BEEN ABANDONED, SINCE TO ANNOUNCE EXCLUSION OF THE RUSSIANS WOULD RISK CHANGES THAT THE GOM HAS ABANDONED ITS OFFICIAL POLICY OF EQUIDISTANCE AND IS TAKING A MORE HOSTILE STAND TOWARD THE SOVIETS THAN TOWARD THE PRC OR THE U.S. (A CHARGE MADE PRIVATELY BY SOVIET COUNSELOR MIAKOTNYKH IN CONVERSATION WITH SOURCE AND OTHER MFA OFFICIALS.)

2. COMMENT: RELIABLE SOURCES REPORT THAT WHILE THE SOVIETS HERE MAY SUSPECT THAT THE PROJECT HAS BEEN POSTPONED FOR THE POLITICAL REASONS DISCUSSED IN PREVIOUS CABLES, THEY DO NOT APPEAR TO REALIZE THAT GOM SENSITIVITY TO THE EFFECTS OF AN INCREASED SOVIET PRESENCE HERE IS SO GREAT THAT THE PROJECT HAS BEEN COMPLETELY ABANDONED. THEREFORE, WE CAN ANTICIPATE FURTHER RUSSIAN EFFORTS TO STIR THE GOM TO APPROVAL OF THE LONG POSTPONED VISIT OF A TECHNICAL DELEGATION TO DISCUSS THE PROJECT. (IT MAY BE THAT GOM HAS DECIDED 400 MEGAWATT HYDRO ON NEARBY TRENGGANU RIVER, WHICH SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION WITH SAME TIME FRAME, CAN SERVICE AREA ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR 110 MEGAWATT TEMBELING HYDRO. TOTAL INCREASE IN ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION DURING NEXT FIVE YEARS TARGETED AT 1088 MW SO DROPPING TEMBELING PROJECT WOULD NOT SERIOUSLY CURTAIL MALAYSIA'S POWER CAPACITY.)
UNDERHILL

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